VISIT…

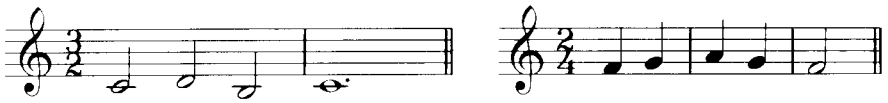
Test 1B: Echo singing

'To sing, as an echo, three short phrases limited to a range of three notes in a major key played by the examiner. The echoes should follow each phrase in strict time without an intervening pause. The key-chord and tonic will first be sounded and the pulse indicated.'

The aim of this test is to develop a good sense of pitch as well as a rhythmical response. A limited number of notes is used, but, before attempting these, pupils should be secure in the pitching of single notes as required in the Associated Board's Preparatory Test.

If pupils find difficulty in pitching a note, it may be that the note is outside their vocal range, and so a suitable adjustment to the teacher's choice of notes will be necessary. Where a pupil experiences greater difficulty and appears not to have any concept of pitch, extreme patience and regular help will be required starting with the apparent single pitch (monotone) the pupil is using.

In all sung tests, pupils should be encouraged to use a strong voice (but not necessarily loud), preferably using a vowel preceded by a consonant. Do not just use 'lah'. Vary the diet with, for example, 'low', 'may', 'mee', etc. and use pitch names which will help them associate names with note sounds: e.g.

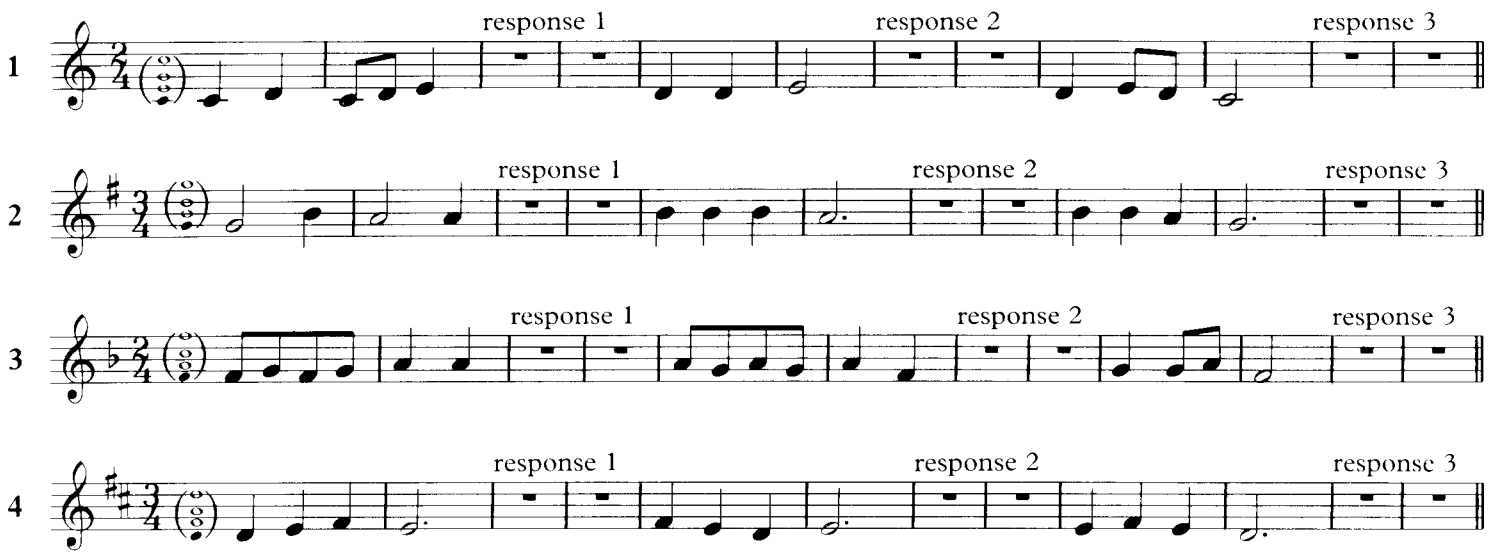


Where pupils lack confidence to sing out, let them hum first, gradually opening the mouth until a clear vowel sound emerges: e.g. mm.....ma mm.....me mm.....mo.

N.B. If the piano is used to give the pitch, it will probably be necessary to repeat the note several times in quick succession before the pupil picks up the vibration and attempts to reproduce the pitch, but do not 'hammer' the notes. Playing louder does not help.

Practise other groups of notes of equal length before proceeding to the following practice tests.

PRACTICE TESTS

Introduce each test by saying: 'I shall play three short phrases. After I play each phrase, I want you to sing it like an echo and in time. Here is the key-chord ..... and the tonic ..... Here is the pulse .....'

'Count in' by giving two bars, e.g. in 2-time the pulse should be given as 1,2,1,2, with the test beginning on the next down-beat. This principle should be adopted in all tests in 1B, 1C, 2B, 2C, 3B and 3C.